



Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce

*Cindy Hyde-Smith,
Commissioner*

**2015 Annual
Report**

**Mississippi Department of
Agriculture and Commerce
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Letter from Your Commissioner



Cindy Hyde-Smith, Commissioner

When most think about agriculture, they think about farming, but agriculture goes beyond the raising of livestock or growing and harvesting of a crop. Agriculture encompasses all of the steps that it takes to get agriculture products from one of the state's 37,100 farms to you in the form of an end product. It includes the processing, handling, transporting, packaging, distributing, and even marketing and sales of crops and agriculture products.

Agriculture, Mississippi's largest industry, employs approximately 29 percent of the state's workforce. The farm-gate value of the agricultural and forestry products produced in the state in 2015 was \$7.4 billion with the value-added to the economy by agriculture and forestry production being \$16.1 billion.

The responsibilities of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce (MDAC) are multifaceted. The agency impacts the lives of each Mississippian, not just those involved in

agriculture. The mission of MDAC is to promote Mississippi's agricultural industry while enforcing laws governing the various agricultural sectors and providing services to consumers and agribusinesses. This Fiscal Year 2015 Annual Report details the many accomplishments of the Department as our dedicated staff strives to serve the consumers of Mississippi in an efficient and effective manner while utilizing taxpayer funds wisely. The collaborations and joint efforts with other State and Federal agencies along with the Mississippi Legislature are also integral to the Department's success.

The Bureau of Regulatory Services is responsible for the many regulatory functions of the Department which extend from the from on-farm production to processing and retail markets. Regulatory Service Inspectors conduct sanitation inspections of grocery stores and meat plants to ensure the adherence of food safety regulations. They are also responsible for the certification of gas pumps and verification of weights and measures.

The Bureau of Plant Industry protects the agricultural and horticultural interests of the state from harmful insects, diseases, and weeds. The Bureau is also responsible for registering pesticides, feeds, seeds, fertilizers, and soil amendments sold in the state, as well as, permitting all pest control operators throughout the state.

The Mississippi Agricultural and Livestock Theft Bureau enforces laws to prevent agricultural related thefts. The Bureau investigates any theft that involves agribusiness, including timber theft, equipment theft, chemical theft, and livestock theft, and the Bureau also handles the registration of all livestock brands in the state.

The Market Development Division is respon-

sible for promoting Mississippi's agricultural products and agriculturally-related businesses statewide and worldwide through programs such as the Certified Farmers Market Program, Agritourism Registration Program, Farm-to-School, Make Mine Mississippi, and the *Mississippi Market Bulletin*. The Mississippi Farmers Market provides farmers, specialty food processors, and artisans with a convenient, affordable location to sell their locally grown and produced items directly to the consumer.

The Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Museum, the educational arm of the Department, creates an environment that communicates the value of the past and present Mississippi agricultural lifestyles, relationships, and practices and their relevance. The Ag Museum tells the story of Mississippi's agricultural history through indoor and outdoor exhibits and events.

In addition to overseeing the responsibilities of the Department, duties as your Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce include leadership through service on the following state boards including Mississippi Board of Animal Health, Mississippi Central Farmers Market Board, Mississippi Fair Commission, Mississippi Land, Water, and Timber Resources Board, Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality Permit Board, Mississippi Egg Marketing Board, State Seed Board, and State Soil & Water Conservation Committee.

I encourage you to learn more about the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce through our website www.mdac.ms.gov.

Sincerely,

Cindy Hyde-Smith

Commissioner

INDEX

Letter from Your Commissioner	2
Administration	5
Revenue and Expenditures	6
Regulatory Services	7-11
Bureau of Plant Industry	12-13
Market Development	14-15
Central Farmers Market	15
MS Agriculture and Forestry Museum	16
Information Management	17
Agriculture and Livestock Theft	17

Mississippi Agriculture Facts

- **\$7.4 billion value of production**
- **37,100 farms**
- **10.9 million acres of land farmed**
- **19.7 million acres of forest land**
- **640,000 acres of ponds and lakes**
- **40,000 water acres of catfish production**
- **Mississippi ranks #1 nationally in catfish production**
- **Average farm size is 294 acres**
- **Average age of Mississippi farmer 60.4**
- **29% of the state's workforce employed in jobs related directly or indirectly to agriculture**
- **Mississippi ranks in the Top 20 nationally in the production of 15 agricultural commodities**

Source: Mississippi State University & USDA 2015 Agriculture Census



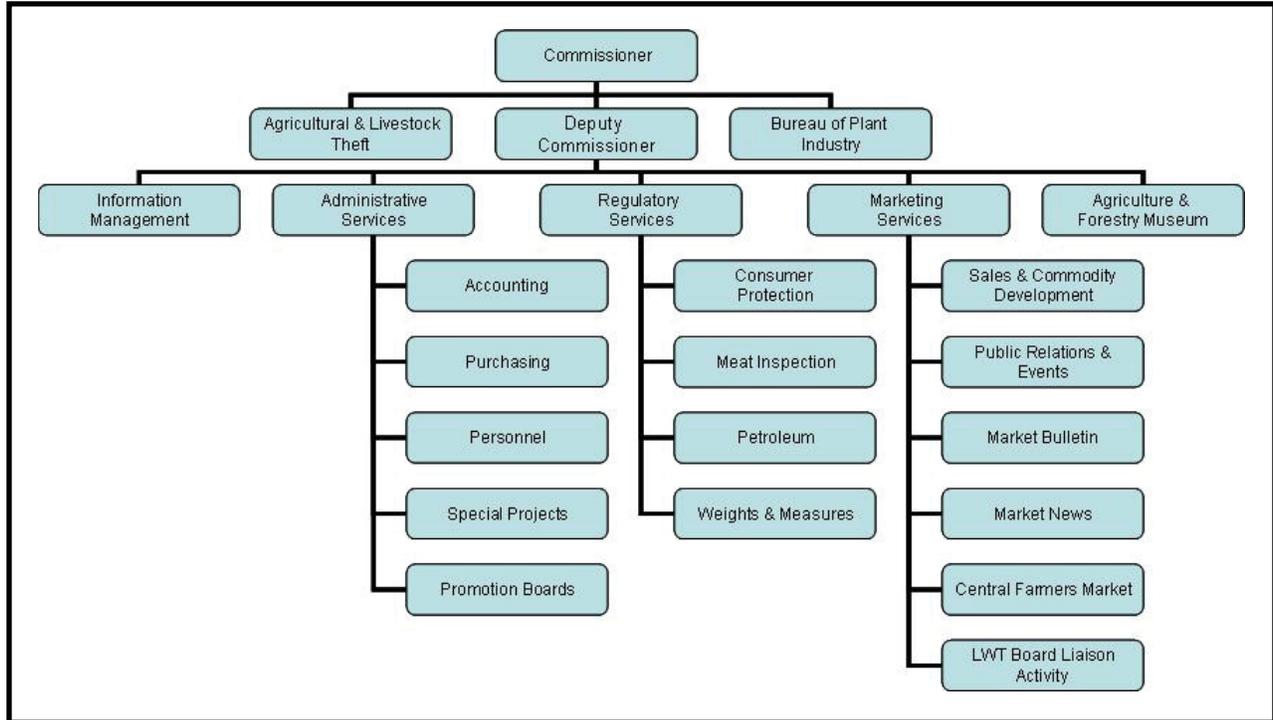
2015 Mississippi Value of Production

Broilers/Eggs/Chickens	\$3.2 billion
Forestry	\$1.2 billion
Soybeans	\$930 million
Cattle	\$448 million
Corn	\$343 million
Cotton	\$254 million
Catfish	\$185 million
Rice	\$132 million
Horticulture	\$112 million
Hay	\$105 million
Hogs	\$100 million
Sweet Potatoes	\$81 million
Grain Sorghum	\$39 million
Wheat	\$32 million
Milk	\$32 million
Peanuts	\$29 million
Other Payments	\$230 million
Grand Total	\$7.4 billion

Source: Mississippi State University

Administration

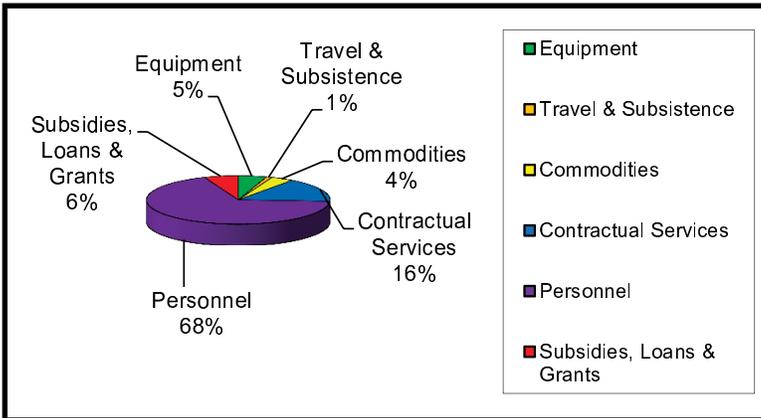
Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce Organization Chart



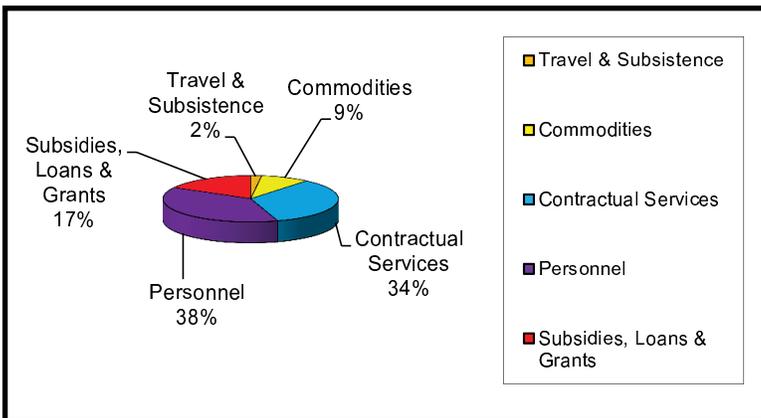
Administration

Cindy Hyde-Smith - Commissioner
John Campbell - Deputy Commissioner

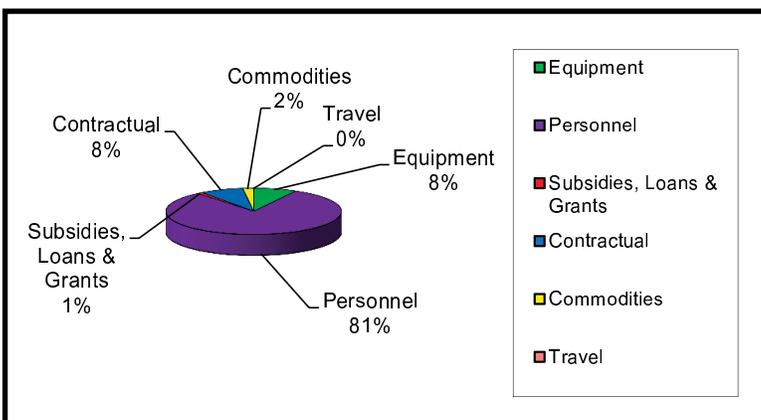
Revenues and Expenditures



MDAC Support Budget General and Special Funds FY 2015	
Total Revenues	\$15,139,961
Total Expenditures	\$14,175,540



Special Funds Only	
Total Revenues	\$5,561,320
Total Expenditures	\$4,596,899



General Fund Only	
Total Revenues	\$9,578,641
Total Expenditures	\$9,578,641

Regulatory Services



The Bureau of Regulatory Services is a regulatory bureau within the Department that is divided into area-specific divisions, which regulates businesses in the state. The Legislature established a regulatory office within the Department pursuant to Mississippi Code Ann. 69-1-203. The goal of the Bureau of Regulatory Services is to ensure that businesses maintain their activities within a certain framework of laws and regulations, with the purpose of protecting the public health and welfare and establishing equity in the marketplace.

The Bureau of Regulatory Services administers state laws and promulgates regulations to support those laws in the areas of Meat Inspection, Retail Food Sanitation, Labeling laws, Grain, Aquaculture, Peanuts, Petroleum, and Weights and Measures. The Bureau partners with federal and other state agencies.

Julie McLemore, Director
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Regulatory Services - Consumer Protection Division

The primary responsibility mission of the Consumer Protection Division is to ensure food quality and safety at the retail level and to ensure fairness and equity in the marketplace through the administration and enforcement of specific laws and regulations designed primarily to protect the interests of the general public.

The Consumer Protection Division is one of the most diversified divisions in the Department of Agriculture and Commerce. In addition to certain retail food safety and sanitation responsibilities, the Division also focuses on weights and measures inspections and food labeling requirements.

The health of Mississippi consumers is benefited by the inspections that Consumer Protection inspectors perform every day. Sanitation at meat markets, food at appropriate temperatures, soap in restrooms, and the absence of insects and rodents are just a few of the things inspectors routinely check.

The Division also protects consumers behind the scenes. If you've ever been in a grocery store and wondered how check-out scales are accurate or how customers get what they pay for, the Consumer Protection Division is responsible for ensuring weights and measures standards in retail food establishments.

Weights and measures include the following:

- Ensuring the accuracy of scales, including meat scales, deli scales, produce scales, and checkout scales.
- Sample testing of UPC price verification which ensures that prices on the shelves match prices at the checkout registers.
- Conducting inspections of package net weights to ensure not only that consumers are paying for only the net weight of foods, but also that prices properly reflect the correct weight.

The Consumer Protection Division benefits the financial welfare of consumers by striving to ensure that consumers get what they pay for and

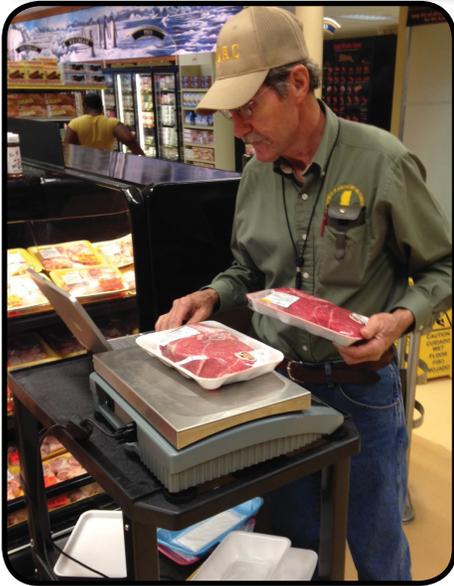
that they pay no more than the advertised prices of goods.

Proper food labeling is also a responsibility of the Division. The Division conducts meat compliance inspections in retail food establishments under a USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service Cooperative Agreement. These inspections make sure that illegally processed meats are not in the channels of commerce.

In addition, the Division also conducts Country-of-Origin Labeling (COOL) inspections under a USDA Cooperative Agreement. The benefit of these inspections is that consumers are aware of where certain foods come from such as muscle cuts of meats, fresh fruits and vegetables, and unprocessed nuts which must have a country-of-origin declaration at the final point of sale. The enforcement of COOL laws increases consumer knowledge and allows consumers to have a greater range of choices.

Consumer Protection, continued on next page

Consumer Protection, *continued from page 7*



Food labeling extends to honey and syrup also. To ensure that consumers are in fact buying pure honey and pure syrup when labels state such claims, the Division works in concert with the Mississippi State Department of Health to regulate the sale of pure honey and pure syrup.

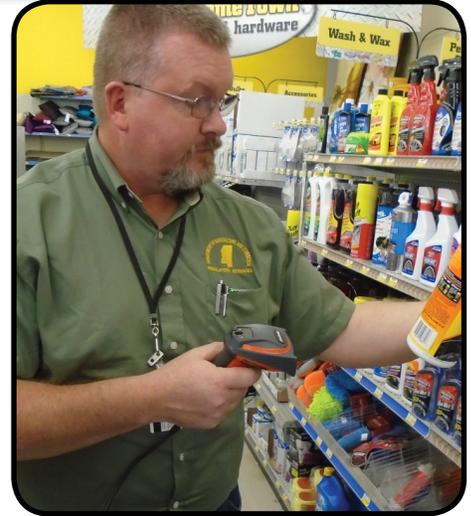
Inspectors also ensure that catfish, shrimp, and crawfish are labeled properly in restaurants and retailers where the items are sold.

The Mississippi Certified Farmers Market (CFM) Program, which is administered by the MDAC Marketing Department, is carried out in conjunction with the Consumer Protection Division. Consumer Protection inspectors inspect all farmers markets applying for CFM eligibility to ensure certain requirements from vendors and their produce are met.

The Division also has a natural disaster partnership with the FDA to work with that agency and other state agencies in the event of a natural disaster, such as a hurricane or a tornado outbreak. In order to help respond to emergencies, the Division has mapped GPS coordinates of all stores.

Consumer Protection Statistics

- Items checked for net weight (11% placed off sale and reweighed) 44,846
- Dozens of shell eggs inspected 105,710
- Scales tested (100 pounds or less) (1.7% out of compliance) 6,601
- Labeling inspections 5,294
- Meat compliance inspections 5,206
- Retail food sanitation inspections 4,936
- Inspections for commercial garbage disposal compliance 5,611
- Universal Product Code price verification 1,645 inspections (20% out of compliance)



- Catfish Marketing Law inspections (11% out of compliance) 360
- USDA COOL audits (\$28,000 in revenues for the Department) 44
- MS Farmers Markets certified 28

 Adam Choate, Director
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Peanuts and Federal/State Inspection Service

The Federal/State Inspection Division provides fruit and vegetable inspections, as well as third party food safety audits known as Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Handling Practices (GHP) audits. All inspections and food safety audits are provided statewide to farms, packers, and wholesalers.

The GAP/GHP audits are voluntary independent audits of produce suppliers throughout the production and supply chain. GAP/GHP audits focus on best agricultural practices to verify that fruits and vegetables are produced, packed, handled, and stored in the safest manner possible to minimize risks of microbial food safety hazards. The audits verify adherence to the recommendations made in the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's *Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables* and industry recognized food safety practices. During FY 2015, 60 GAP/GHP audits were performed.

MDAC graded 43,000 tons of peanuts in 2015. Farmer stock peanut inspections have increased dramatically from their beginning in 2006. In



2006, there was only one peanut buying point that graded 2,500 tons and employed two contract employees. As of FY 2015, there are four peanut buying points in the state, employing twenty seasonal contract workers.

 Kevin Riggan, Director
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Regulatory Services - Petroleum Division



Motor fuel sold in the State of Mississippi is regulated by the Petroleum Products Inspection Division of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce. The Petroleum Division ensures the quality and quantity of fuel purchased within the state. All retail motor fuel products which include gasoline, ethanol blended fuel, diesel fuel, biodiesel blended fuel, and kerosene are analyzed by the Mississippi State Chemical Lab to ensure product compliance within ASTM specifications, which includes octane number, alcohol content, diesel flash point, biodiesel content, and the presence of water in fuel.

In FY 2015, the Petroleum Division responded to over 250 consumer complaints, which resulted in over one-quarter being out of compliance. Complaints are typically addressed within a 24-hour period and results are communicated to the complainant. In addition, the Division conducts annual device inspections and fuel quality inspections. Water and sign inspections are also conducted on site during each inspection to ensure compliance. Total inspections of 2,849 retail establishments involving over 62,000 individual devices were handled for the fiscal year. A total of 4,672 violations were issued for non-compliant devices.

Hi-volume meters typical of bulk racks are approved using the Petroleum Division's 150-gallon Calibration Trailer; truck stop meters are approved using the Division's 60-gallon Calibration Trailers. Diesel Exhaust Fluid now available through a metering device at most major truck fueling sites is also checked during the annual inspection along with the truck stop meters.

The Petroleum Division also observed and certified meters offering Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) for sale to the public within the state. A total of four CNG fueling sites are now in use in Mississippi.

A total of \$18,500 in administrative complaints was collected for non-compliant product. All funds collected are deposited into the general fund.

Petroleum Division Responsibilities

• Stations registered	2,849
• Petroleum devices tested	62,439
• Petroleum products samples	1,953
• Violations issued	4,672
• Stop sales for fuel violations	135
• Sales for calibration violations	136
• Stop sales for sign violations	406
• Stop sales for water violations	198
• Total nozzles	52,830

Annual upgrades to the WinWam Computer software program designed specifically for Weights & Measures officials continue to allow field personnel to work more independently and efficiently. All inspection information is available for immediate synchronization to the main office computer giving complete access to all inspection data by office personnel within hours.

Wi-Fi Hotspots provide better and more effective coverage and provide inspectors the ability to email pictures of potential problem situations instantaneously as well as send and receive emails and submit inspection reports relevant to complaints and other information from the field. Laptop mounts in all vehicles have proven a safe means to transport and to use laptops for data entry while on site.



State of the art slide-in calibration units are provided for all field personnel allowing them a more efficient manner in which to verify calibration of retail motor fuel dispensing devices through random retail device inspections. Custom flatbeds have replaced the typical truck bed, providing inspectors an even safer method of inspection.

 Jennifer Thompson, Director
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Regulatory Services - Meat Inspection Division

The Meat Inspection Division provides food safety assurance to meat and poultry food consumers. This is done by providing inspection services to establishments that prepare meat and poultry food products for entry into intrastate commerce and to some establishments that engage in interstate commerce. This assurance is becoming more critical as more food products are intended to be consumed with little or no further preparation at home.

The Division began with the Meat, Meat-Food, and Poultry Regulation and Inspection Law of 1960. The law was amended with the Mississippi Meat Inspection Law of 1968, at which time it entered into a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The purpose of the cooperative agreement is to establish a meat and poultry inspection system that is equal to the federal inspection system. MDAC has cooperative agreements for the Talmadge-Aiken Program (TA), which permits state employees to provide inspections at Federal meat plants and the Compliance and Investigation Division Program (CID), which gives authority to inspect businesses that handle meat and poultry for law compliance.

The Meat Inspection Division has moved from organoleptic inspection to newly-evolving scientific methods of assessing the effectiveness of food safety systems. This Division is constantly implementing new scientific advancements in food safety. Each establishment that produces meat products now have interventions in place to eliminate or control the pathogens that are most likely to cause food borne illness.

The Meat Inspection Division has transitioned to a new computerized inspection system, Public Health Information System (PHIS). The system



intergrates data from all program areas allowing the inspector to make the most informed decisions about food safety.

- Number of plants inspected through the Talmadge-Aiken program 22

Meat Inspection Division Statistics

• Pounds of red meat inspected	38,887,052
• Pounds of poultry inspected	69,381,634
• Number of animals inspected	109,363
• Number of rabbits inspected	40,858
• Number of state meat plant licenses issued	26

Dr. Richard Benton, Director

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Regulatory Services - Weights and Measures Division

The Weights and Measures Division serves a valuable consumer and commercial protection function for the people of the State of Mississippi. The Division regulates the use of weighing and measuring devices used commercially within the state to ensure compliance with the Weights and Measures Law of 1964. The use of the Windows for Weights and Measures (WinWam) computer software has allowed our inspectors and officials to provide effective and accurate inspections in accordance with the United States National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) regulations.

The team of dedicated weights and measures inspectors and officials ensure equity in the marketplace by making routine inspections on those devices. The inspectors inspect and test all types of commercial weighing devices including railroad scales, vehicle scales, livestock scales, and those used to weigh precious metals and stones



like gold, silver, and diamonds. The Division promotes marketplace equity through check weighing packages to verify their labeled weight and UPC-price verification of all businesses that

use UPC scanning systems. The Division also investigates complaints involving weighing and measuring devices and their use. In addition, the Department licenses livestock sale barns, livestock auctioneers, pulpwood facilities, bonded weighmaster businesses, and scale repairmen and companies that sell, install, and repair weighing or measuring devices within the State of Mississippi.

Moisture Meter Testing Laboratory

The Mississippi Moisture Meter Laboratory is also a part of the Weights and Measures Division and is located on the campus of the Delta Research and Extension Center in Stoneville, Mississippi. The lab provides testing and inspection of devices used to measure the moisture content of

Weights & Measures, *continued on next page*

Weights and Measures, continued from page 10



Weights and Measures Division Overview

- Tested 1,245 heavy scales with 311 out of compliance
- Tested 4,472 intermediate scales with 433 out of compliance
- Tested 201 livestock scales with 23 out of compliance
- Tested 65 rail scales with 9 out of compliance
- Calibrated 67 dairy farm milk tanks
- Bonded 84 Weighmaster inspections with 25 out of compliance
- Conducted 222 pulpwood/timber inspections with 72 out of compliance
- Checked 3,275 packages with 17 out of compliance
- Handled 130 UPC inspections with 19 out of compliance
- Tested 505 gram scales with 108 out of compliance
- Tested 261 grain moisture meters with 7 out of compliance
- Oven tested 30 soybean, 38 corn, 98 wheat, and 25 rice samples

Brent Bowman, Director
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agricultural products offered for sale, processed, or stored, using standard methods set by the USDA. The Moisture Meter Lab also compiles grain standards used in the inspection of grain moisture meters tested in the State of Mississippi.



Weights and Measures Inspector randomly checks to see if the shelf price matches the scanned UPC.

Regulatory Services - State Metrology Lab

The Regulatory Division maintains the State Metrology Laboratory located on the campus of Alcorn State University in Lorman, Mississippi. The lab is accredited by the National Institute of Standard and Technology (NIST) which certifies weighing and measuring test equipment to validate the accuracy of these standards. The certification allows the lab to provide certification and calibration services for government, commercial, and private entities. Once certified, the equipment then can be used for testing and calibrating of mass and volume standards. This certification allows the Department to test all measuring devices for accuracy used in commerce which is traceable to NIST.



**State Metrology Laboratory
Lorman, MS.**

The Metrology Laboratory Overview

- Total calibrations were 5,201.
- Collected \$50,458.98 in calibrations fees.

Mel Isajgi, Director
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Bureau of Plant Industry



Bureau of Plant Industry is located in Starkville, Mississippi.

The Bureau of Plant Industry (BPI) is a regulatory and service division of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce. BPI serves as the Plant Protection and Quarantine Division of the agency. It carries out regulatory programs pertaining to agricultural aviation, pesticides, plant pests, honey bees, seed, animal feed, fertilizer, lime, and soil/plant amendments. Additionally, it maintains cooperative agreements with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in administration and enforcement of state and federal laws.

Purpose

The State Plant Board was established under the Mississippi Plant Act of 1918, Sections 69-25-1 through 69-25-47, Mississippi Code 1972, to protect the agricultural and horticultural interests of the state from the introduction and spread of destructive plant pests. In 1971, the Mississippi Legislature abolished the board and established the Division of Plant Industry within the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce to assume the board's duties and responsibilities. In 1991, the name of the Division of Plant Industry was changed to the Bureau of Plant Industry. In 1996, the state agriculture department's Seed Division and Feed, Fertilizer, Lime, and Soil/Plant Amendments Division were placed under the administration of the Bureau.

Legislative Authority

The Bureau is responsible for the administration and enforcement of the following state statutes:

- Mississippi Plant Act of 1918, Sections 69-25-1 through 69-25-47
- Mississippi Bee Disease Act of 1920, Sections 69-25-101 through 69-25-109
- Regulation of Professional Services Law of 1938, Sections 69-19-1 through 69-19-15
- Agricultural Aviation Licensing Law of 2009,

Sections 69-21-101 through 69-21-128

- Mississippi Pure Seed Law of 1968, Sections 69-3-1 through 69-3-29
- Mississippi Commercial Feed Law of 1972, Sections 75-45-151 through 75-45-195
- Mississippi Fertilizer Law of 1972, Sections 75-47-1 through 75-47-39
- Mississippi Pesticide Law of 1975, Sections 69-23-1 through 69-23-29
- Mississippi Pesticide Application Act of 1975, Sections 69-23-101 through 69-23-135
- Mississippi Soil and Plant Amendment Law of 1978, Sections 69-24-1 through 69-24-27
- Mississippi Boll Weevil Management Act of 1993, Sections 69-37-1 through 69-37-41
- Mississippi Agricultural Liming Materials Act of 1993, Sections 69-39-1 through 69-39-19

The Bureau is also designated by the federal government as the state agency responsible for the administration and enforcement of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA).

Plant Pest Program

- Conducted 632 nursery inspections and 1,063 nursery dealer inspections.
- Conducted 19 inspections for Brown Garden Snail on plant materials shipped from California.
- Certified and inspected 18,221 colonies of honey bees.
- Permitted 50,804 bee colonies into Mississippi.
- Issued 536 phytosanitary certificates on plant material and seed export.
- Monitored 2,684 traps on 22,553 acres of sweet potatoes with no positive Sweet Potato Weevil detection.

- Conducted Cogongrass demonstration program for 246 private land owners. 973 acres were treated in the program.
- Collected assessment fees on 308,691 acres of cotton by farmers participating in state wide eradication of the Boll Weevil.
- Issued 17 landscape horticulturist licenses.
- Issued 6 tree surgery licenses.
- Conducted 1,695 surveys statewide at nurseries and nursery dealers for Pink Hibiscus Mealybug, Chrysanthemum White Rust, Viburnum Leaf Beetle, Emerald Ash Borer, Giant African Snail, Cactus Moth, and Asian Longhorned Beetle. All sites were found to be negative.
- Conducted 408 surveys in 21 counties at soybean production fields for Maritime Garden Snail, Soybean Pod Borer, Cucurbit Beetle, Pink Hibiscus Mealybug, Yellow Witchweed, and Benghal Dayflower. Benghal Dayflower was found at one site in Covington County. All sites were found to be negative.
- Conducted 82 surveys in 3 counties at cotton production fields for Giant African Snail, Cotton Seed Bug, Pink Hibiscus Mealybug, Egyptian Broomrape, and Benghal Dayflower. All sites were found to be negative.
- Conducted 54 visual surveys in 5 counties at rice production fields for Bacterial Leaf Streak of Rice. All sites were found to be negative.
- Conducted 38 surveys in 8 counties at rice production fields for Giant African Snail, Apple Snails, Asiatic Rice Borer, South American Rice Miner, Bakanae, Senegal Tea Plant, YeGu, and Panicle Rice Mite. All sites were found to be negative.
- Conducted 1,695 visual surveys statewide in nurseries, nursery dealers, and the environment for the noxious weed, Giant Salvinia. No positive sites were found.
- Conducted 1,695 visual surveys statewide in nurseries for the noxious weed, Benghal Day flower. No new positive sites were found.
- Conducted 1,695 visual surveys statewide in nurseries and nursery dealers for the noxious weed, Congongrass.
- Placed 6 traps in 6 counties at lumber mills for the Sirex Woodwasp. All traps were found to be negative.
- Placed 136 traps in 53 counties on ash trees for the Emerald Ash Borer. All traps were found to be negative.
- Placed 19 traps in 4 counties at high risk sites for Japanese Pine Sawyer Beetle, Redhaired Pine Bark Beetle, and Pine Shoot Beetle. All traps were found to be negative.
- Placed 75 traps in 11 counties at high risk sites for Africanized Honey Bee. All traps were found to be negative.
- Placed 40 traps in 40 counties at lumber mills for Pine Shoot Beetle. All traps were found to be negative.

BPI, continued on next page



Pesticide Program

- Registered 13,042 pesticide products.
- Collected 402 samples from products available at retail and distribution outlets to check compliance with state and federal pesticide laws.
- Issued 22 stop-sale orders on pesticide products found to be deficient, misbranded, or not registered.
- Issued 6 special-use registrations (Section 24c of FIFRA) on pesticide products.
- Issued 2 emergency exemptions (Section 18 of FIFRA) on pesticide products.
- Licensed 292 dealers to sell restricted-use pesticide products.
- Issued 615 licenses, 40 permits, and 714 registered technician identification cards to persons engaged in professional services. Ex: Pest control and weed control.
- Issued 2,071 private applicator certificates.
- Issued 532 commercial applicator certificates.
- Conducted 62 producer-establishment inspections, 211 marketplace inspections, 407 inspections of applicator records, 126 inspections of dealer records, and 25 container containment inspections.
- Conducted 29 inspections of pesticide misuse and 79 inspections in agricultural situations.
- Conducted 80 inspections of agricultural use and 1,419 inspections in nonagricultural situations.
- Collected 133 samples under the Pesticide Enforcement Program.
- Conducted 34 worker protection inspections.
- Licensed 237 agricultural aviation pilots, 100 applicators, and registered 192 aircraft for agricultural purposes.
- Collected 90,260 pounds of waste pesticide.

- Issued 193 pest management consultants licenses.
- Issued 4 soil classifier licenses.

Seed Program and State Seed Testing Laboratory

- Conducted 320 seed inspections.
- Collected 2,667 official regulatory seed samples.
- Found 89 official regulatory seed samples to be in violation of the State Seed Law.
- Issued 1,472 permits for the sale of seed to be planted.
- Tested 14,482 seed samples.
- Conducted 6,637 special tests on seed such as cool germ test, accelerated aging on soybeans, and red rice test.
- Performed a total of 29,560 tests on seed.

Feed, Fertilizer, Lime, and Soil-Plant Amendments Program

- Registered 715 feed distributors.
- Collected 2,728 feed samples.
- Registered 3,651 fertilizer products from 419 fertilizer distributors.
- Registered 129 lime products from 59 distributors.
- Collected 810 fertilizer samples.
- Collected 66 lime samples.

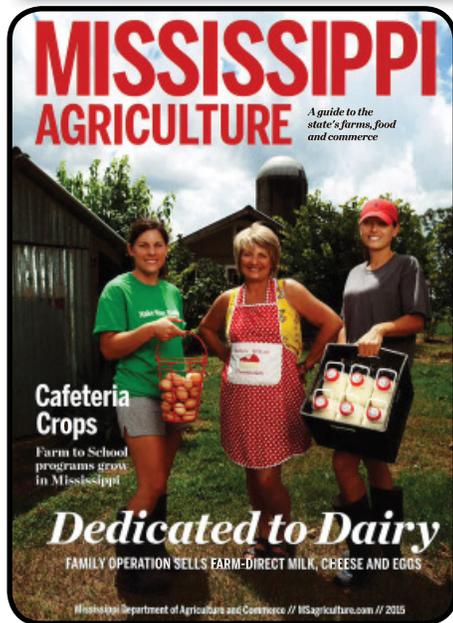
Public Information Program

- Issued the following 5 press releases: Commissioner Hyde-Smith Secures Needed Insecticide for Grain Sorghum Producers Agriculture Commissioner Cindy Hyde - Smith Hosts Tour for EPA Officials, Up coming Pesticide Disposal Events Scheduled for Mississippi Farmers, Commissioner Hyde-Smith Continues to Protect Mississippi's Bee Industry, and Agriculture Commissioner Hyde-Smith Works to Protect Grain Sorghum Producers.
- The BPI partnered with the Mississippi State University Extension Service to develop educational materials for state agencies, the general public, and youth programs regarding Emerald Ash Borer and other invasive species.
- Provided program updates and training material for the following groups and/or events: Panola County Extension Office, Coastal Research and Extension Center, Forrest County Extension Office, Central MS Research and Extension Center, Delta Research and Extension Center, North MS Research and Extension Cen

ter, Annual Mississippi Pest Control Association Meeting, Mississippi Vegetation Management Association, Mississippi Agricultural Aviation Convention, Mississippi Nursery and Landscape Association, Mississippi Entomological Association, Mississippi State University - Row Crop Short Course, Mississippi State University Crop College, Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation - Agricultural Consultants Meeting, Mississippi State University - Suspected Drift & Symptomology for County Agents, Leake and Oktibbeha County Safety Expos.

- Provided exhibit and educational materials at the Fall Flower and Garden Fest in Crystal Springs, Northeast Mississippi Farmer Expo in Verona, and the 2014 Everything Garden Expo in Starkville.
- Worked with various agricultural stakeholders, including Mississippi Farm Bureau, Mississippi Agricultural Aviation Association, and the Mississippi Sweet Potato Council to inform them of the proposed Worker Protection Standard (WPS) regulation changes. BPI also worked with EPA's Region 4 and other advocacy groups, like the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA), to help formulate comments on the proposed changes.
- After meeting with several agricultural stakeholders cooperative standards were developed and launched outlining the Mississippi Honeybee Stewardship Program. This program was developed through a joint effort between the Mississippi Farm Bureau, Mississippi Department of Agriculture, Mississippi Beekeepers Association, Mississippi State Extension Service, Agricultural Consultants Association, and row crop farmers. The program promotes awareness, communication, and education between beekeepers and farmers.
- The Bureau hosted an Advanced Drift Training course for EPA's Region 4 in Starkville, MS. The training focused on issues related to pesticide drift investigation, including sampling techniques, interviewing techniques, evidence gathering and reporting. Over thirty pesticide inspectors received the training.

John Campbell, Bureau Director
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Agriculture is Mississippi's number one industry, employing approximately 29% of the state's workforce either directly or indirectly. In Mississippi, agriculture is a \$7.4 billion industry. There are approximately 37,100 farms in the state covering 11 million acres, which makes agriculture a significant contributor to all 82 counties. The Market Development Division is dedicated to promoting and heightening the public's awareness of Mississippi's agriculture commodities and the farmers and ranchers who produce them.

Market Development Highlights

- Presented agriculture's message to schools and civic organizations across the state.
- Participated in conferences and festivals throughout Mississippi.
- Distributed thousands of recipes using products grown in Mississippi.
- Marketed the *Mississippi Farmers Market Cookbook* with recipes submitted from Mississippians statewide.
- Counseled companies, producers, and organizations.
- Worked with the Mississippi Farmers Market to promote agriculture and healthy eating through cooking demonstrations and other events.
- Administered the Mississippi Certified Farmers Market Program, which is an ongoing marketing initiative for farmers markets across the state. There are currently 28 certified markets cross the state.
- Assisted certified farmers markets with advertising costs through this marketing initiative.
- Assisted in marketing of the Mississippi Farmers Market Nutrition Program.
- The 2015 USDA-Specialty Crop Block Grant Program awarded Mississippi \$481,130.08 to

distribute to organizations that will enhance our state's specialty crop industry. Seventeen projects were awarded to universities and producer organizations to administer research and programs in areas specifically related to consumer and grower education and workshops, food safety, high tunnels, and production for horticulture, sweet potatoes, strawberries, blueberries, and muscadines and grapes.

- Worked with Alcorn State University on Federal State Marketing Improvement Program grant. This grant educates and enables Mississippi small-scale farmers to supply selected produce to the Walmart *Buy Local* Program.
- Conducted six educational workshops for growers and agriculture industry across the state.
- Member of the Southern United States Trade Association, encompassing 15 southern states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. Its mission is to increase exports for United States agriculture and high-value foods.
- Department conducted tours and gave presentations to international visitors.
- Counseled individuals and associations on export opportunities.
- Administered the Mississippi Agritourism limited liability registration program. There are 69 registered agribusiness operations in the state.
- Provided information to statewide media on all important agricultural events.
- Distributed an agricultural commodity directory statewide and through the web at www.mdac.ms.gov.
- Published a directory of the 84 Mississippi farmers markets on the MDAC website.
- Maintained the website www.farmtoschool-week.org to provide educational and promotional materials and resources for schools serving Mississippi grown items.
- Provided 152 Certificates of Free Sale to companies exporting Mississippi agricultural products.
- Conducted an educational event in conjunction with Mississippi Farm to School Week. Nearly 450 kindergarden, first, and second graders were visited by farmers that grew their lunch items.
- Provided 27 school garden grants across the state to educate students on fruit and vegetable production.
- Collaborated with other state and federal agencies to assist small companies.

Public Information

Since 1928, the farming community throughout Mississippi has had access to one of the most important farming tools, the *Mississippi Market Bulletin*. The *Mississippi Market Bulletin* is a buy/sell newspaper for farmers to advertise their agri-

cultural items that have been raised, grown, produced, or operated on their farms. It is the best source for information regarding machinery/equipment, livestock, plants/seeds, agricultural real-estate, or anything related to Mississippi agriculture. It provides a wealth of information delivered to farmers' doors 24 times a year. The *Mississippi Market Bulletin* is a semi-monthly publication, published on the 1st and 15th of each month. Its circulation of 44,500 includes in-state and out-of-state subscribers.

MDAC published the third edition of *Mississippi Agriculture*, a comprehensive guide to the state's farms, food, and commerce. The annual publication utilizes a combination of original photography, reader-friendly graphics, and farmer profiles to tell the story of Mississippi agriculture from the perspective of those that live it each day. *Mississippi Agriculture* serves as an educational tool to increase awareness of the important role that agriculture plays in the local, state, and global economies. The magazine also promotes the state's largest industry to a growing number of consumers concerned about their families' food source.

The digital version of *Mississippi Agriculture* was available online at www.msagriculture.com. In addition to featuring the magazine, the website contains hundreds of farm-to-fork recipes, gardening ideas, farmers market guides, nutrition information, and agriculture stats and facts. The magazine was made available to the public at no charge, and 15,000 copies were distributed. It was supported through advertisements and at no cost to the Agency.

Trade Shows, Conferences, and Fairs

- North American Agricultural Marketing Officials Conference
- Mississippi State Fair
- Dixie National Livestock Show & Rodeo and Parade
- National Association of State Departments of Agriculture
- Southern Association of State Departments of Agriculture
- Mississippi Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association Conference
- Mississippi Agritourism Association Conference
- Southern United States Trade Association
- North Mississippi Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association

Make Mine Mississippi Program

This unique marketing program was created to
Marketing, continued on next page

Marketing, continued from page 14

highlight products at least 51% produced, manufactured, or enhanced in Mississippi. Using a logo to identify these Mississippi value-added products, the program has heightened consumer awareness about the quality and availability of Mississippi products. At the end of FY 2015, 513 companies across the state in 30 categories belonged to the program.

Livestock Market News Service

The Livestock and Grain Market News program is a Federal/State cooperative agreement in conjunction with U.S. Department of Agriculture.

A livestock and grain reporter supervises the dissemination of livestock report collecting and disseminating grain price information and radio and television broadcasts.

This office provides price information on livestock and grain to lending institutions, university agricultural economists, consultants, and livestock associations.

Fifteen livestock auction markets are reported by eight cross-trained Mississippi Board of Animal Health personnel. Prices collected from the twelve sales represent 85% of all the livestock markets throughout the state.

Fruits and Vegetables

A revolving fund is utilized to give our growers fast pay when they sell their products. After

MDAC receives the Bill of Lading confirming the buyer's acceptance of the shipment, a Mississippi grower is paid from this fund within five days. The buyer then pays MDAC instead of paying the grower. Each grower and buyer must sign an acknowledgement with MDAC stating their understanding of the terms and regulations of MDAC's Revolving Fund.

Since 2002, MDAC has been participating in the Farm to School Program in conjunction with the Mississippi Department of Education. This program is administered by the Department of Defense (DoD), which for years bought produce from local growers for military bases. The DoD expanded the Farm to School Program to include the school systems.

MDAC works very closely with the Mississippi Public School Nutritional Purchasing Agent, who receives all orders from the state's schools for produce needed for school cafeterias. MDAC then finds growers to supply the school system with the required fruits and vegetables. In the 2015-2016 school year, more than \$500,000 of Mississippi produce was ordered by local schools. Our growers now have an additional market, and school children are being introduced to locally-grown fruits and vegetables.

In order to increase the number of farmers participating in the Farm to School Program, MDAC established a cost-share program to provide financial assistance to those farmers receiving Good Agricultural Practices/Good Handling Practices (GAP/GHP) certifications. Farmers that participate in the DoD Farm to School Program are required to obtain GAP/GHP certification. Through grant funds, MDAC established the pro-

gram to reimburse farmers for 75% of the cost (up to \$500) incurred to obtain the GAP/GHP certification. In FY 2015, 27 reimbursements were granted.

MDAC offers the Organic Cost Share program to Mississippi farmers. The program provided organic farmers \$8,623 in FY 2015 to off set the cost of the certification. Certifications are required by many retail establishments that sell organic produce.

Agritourism

Agritourism is a fast-growing part of the future of Mississippi's agriculture. With the public's desire for a "farm experience" and for the fun of fairs and festivals, the Department of Agriculture and Commerce is committed to promoting agritourism in our state. The Department has worked collaboratively with the Mississippi Agritourism Association, the Mississippi State University Extension Service, the Mississippi Development Authority, and the Mississippi Department of Transportation to assist and promote the agritourism industry. Joint efforts have resulted in a new Agritourism Registration Program that provides limited liability to persons engaged in agritourism activities, and a new Signage Program which allows qualified agritourism businesses to have directional signage on the right-of-way of state maintained highways. Sixty-nine operations are registered through the Agritourism Registration Program.

Paige Manning, Director

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Mississippi Farmers Market

The Mississippi Farmers Market was created by an Act of Legislature, House Bill 54 Laws of 1946. The Market was created to provide facilities for the efficient handling of farm products in the interest of the farmer, consumer, general public, and the State of Mississippi.

In February 2006, the Farmers Market moved to the new 18,000 square foot market facility located at the corner of Jefferson and High Street.

The Market rents space to seasonal fruit and vegetable farmers, specialty food vendors, and artisans from across the state. It also provides a place where consumers can buy products directly from the growers or producers. The Market also rents the facility for private parties and events. The Farmer's Table restaurant rents space from the Market and serves breakfast and lunch six days per week.



The Farmers Market debuted the pizza garden in the Spring of 2015.

On average, the Market serves more than 100 businesses across the state. The Mississippi Farmers Market has an average of nearly 1,500 customers each week shopping during the peak months of the summer vegetable season. The Market promotes itself on the Mississippi Farmers Market Facebook page with over 15,000 "Likes".

Frank Malta, Director

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Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum



The Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum hosted 109,471 visitors in FY 2015. A fire in November 2014 destroyed the Museum's Children's Barnyard, Veterinary Clinic, Maintenance Shop, and storage pole barns. The fire destroyed nearly \$2,000,000 worth of structures, tools, equipment, and artifacts. Furthermore, the clean-up effort took 2 months, during which the Museum was closed to the public, and professional cleaning, and debris removal services were on the grounds.

Although the November 2014 fire was devastating to the campus, the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum was able to regroup and continue events, apply and receive grants, and construct projects outside of the burn radius.

The mission of the Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum is to create an environment that communicates the value of past and present Mississippi agricultural lifestyles, relationships, and practices and their relevance to the future of all people.

Annual Event Highlights

- The Second Annual Jackson Rhythm & Blues Festival was held at the Ag Museum. Attendance ranged between 8,000-10,000 festival-goers. This event has become a Mississippi tradition celebrating blues music and Mississippi artists.
- For more than 20 years, the Ag Museum has been home to the Celtic Fest. Over 1,000 attendees enjoyed the event in September 2014.
- Nearly 5,500 children and adults attended the October Pumpkin Adventure which included a hay ride tour of gardens and Small Town Mississippi, a snack, a walk around the Museum, and a pumpkin to take home.
- Harvest Festival was visited by more than 4,000 people. This educational event consisted of demonstrations at the saw mill, cane mill, print shop, blacksmith shop, and grist mill. The Bisland Cotton Gin, the oldest cotton gin in the United States still in operation, ginned 4 bales for visitors. The event also featured hit-and-miss engines, bluegrass music, antique tractors, and live interpreters demonstrating butter churning at the Fortenberry-Parkman Farmstead. The fire started on the second to last day of Harvest Festival, reducing attendance from previous years.

- Forestry Days were held on all four Saturdays in March. The events consisted of demonstrations on forestry and forestry products as well as educational opportunities for forestry tradespeople.
- The Mississippi Egg Marketing Board's Annual Easter Egg Hunt and Spring Planting Day at the Ag Museum attracted over 1,700 visitors who enjoyed complimentary sausage and biscuits, egg dyeing, games, and the egg hunt.
- Spring Farm Days offered the opportunity for over 200 visitors to see mule-powered plowing demonstrations, blacksmith demonstrations, and tour the Fortenberry-Parkman Farmstead.
- AgVentures!, held in partnership with Mississippi State University Extension Service, Mississippi Farm Bureau, Mississippi Cattlemen's Association, Mississippi Cattlewomen's Association, Mississippi Department of Wildlife Fisheries and Parks, Mississippi Soil and Water Conservation Service, and USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, was presented for 700 4th grade students and teachers who learned the important role agriculture plays. Interactive activities and displays included a visit to the barnyard, a tour of the nature trail, milking Cloverbelle the Cow at the 4-H Museum, and presentations about soybeans, composting, and the cotton gin.
- In Partnership with Southern AgCredit, the Mississippi Ag Museum Foundation held a "Raising the Barn" Benefit and Expo on the Ag Museum grounds. The concert and expo had over 300 attendances.

New Projects

- The Mississippi Agriculture and Forestry Museum continued to improve and utilize the new branding in a variety of mediums. New brochures were published with the theme "Unplug and Rediscover Real Fun." Coinciding with this theme, the Museum released a short, animated commercial to be aired on local television. The Museum also implemented a seed campaign to enhance visitor involvement. *Dixie Queen* watermelon seeds were distributed to visitors through the month of April with instructions on how to plant the seeds and cultivate the crop. Guests were then invited to track their progress on Instagram with the hashtag #msagmuseum as well as to return to the Museum with their watermelon to participate in the Largest Watermelon Contest at the Museum's Country Fair. We are also in the process of publishing a new and improved website, which will be more up-to-date and user-friendly.
- The Museum completed the planning and architectural design phases of the Fortenberry-Parkman Farmstead restoration made possible by the Community Heritage Preservation Grant administered by the Mississippi Department of Archives & History. These plans were approved by the Mississippi Department of Archives & History, and the groundbreaking for

this work is scheduled for January 2016. The collection of buildings is significant because it is a fully intact Mississippi farm representative of the typical farmer from 1860 to 1960. The culmination of this project is scheduled for completion December 2016 and will return the Farmstead to an accessible state to the public, increase the educational value of the exhibit, and restore a site that has great potential for heritage tourism.

- With the aid of volunteers, a new observation deck was designed and installed for the Museum's sawmill. This deck allows visitors to better view the sawmill and its operation, and it is ADA accessible so that all guests may enjoy its use.

The Museum continues to work on the following grant projects:

- The USDA National Resources Conservation Service awarded the Museum a grant of \$49,999. The first phase of this grant implementation was the remediation of the Museum's livestock pastures and development of new pastures. The fencing of these pastures was improved for the purpose of allowing educational conservation demonstrations. The second phase involved implementing a pollinator trail. Completion of the pollinator trail is scheduled for December 2015. The pollinator trail will educate visitors on the various plants and species that encourage the birds and bees to do their job.
- The Jackson Convention and Visitors Bureau awarded a grant of \$13,500 as a reimbursement for 2014-2015 advertisement expenses.

Aaron Rodgers, Director

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Information Management

The Information Management Division (IMD) is primarily responsible for providing information technology and services to all employees of the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce. Also, IMD provides technical and network support, applications development and systems support, and strategic planning services for both the Mississippi Board of Animal Health and the Mississippi State Fair Commission.

IMD plays a critical role in aligning information technology with the agency's business goals, providing the infrastructure resources to support the agency's communication and decision making, and exploring emerging technologies to promote agriculture and commerce in the state.

New Projects

The Information Management Division successfully accomplished the following major projects during the last fiscal year:

- Replaced the Bureau of Plant Industry's two computer network servers and upgraded the fiber infrastructure thus more than doubling Internet connection speed for all users. Also, upgraded Seed Lab's Pure Harvest software for managing test results and inspection data used to validate seed quality and purity.
- Designed, developed, and implemented a website and database management system for the Mississippi Board of Animal Health to provide updated news and information on Pathogenic Avian Influenza occurrences in the state for farmers, agribusinesses, and citizens. The system also allows farmers and agribusinesses to request permits online for

moving birds within the state.

- Upgraded tablet computers and regulatory inspection software for Consumer Protection division field inspectors. The upgraded software provides inspectors with easier and faster searches of business information in the field and reflects new and changed federal guidelines that each state follows in performing its duties for Weights and Measures practices.
- Revamped the agency website to a new content management system with easy navigation, user friendly features, and easy access to quickly update agency information.

 Umesh Sanjanwala, Director
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Agriculture and Livestock Theft

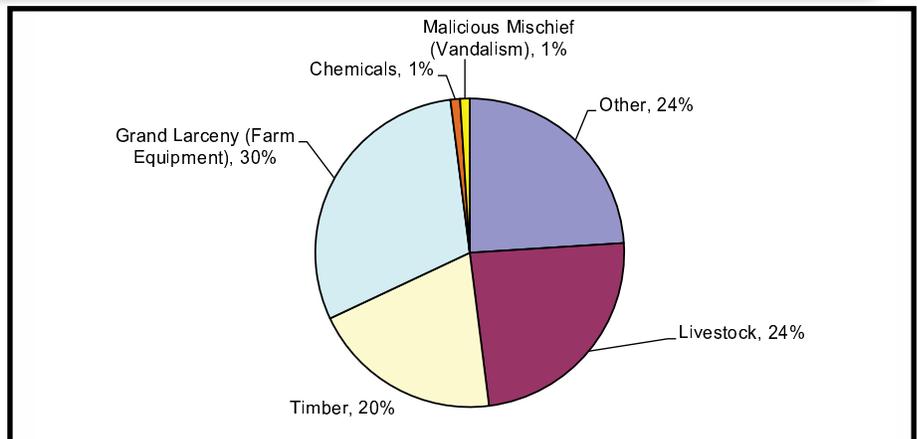


The Agriculture and Livestock Theft Bureau was created in 1993 to assist in the investigation of all farm and agriculture-related crimes. Nine investigators, one for each Mississippi Highway Patrol District, are charged with enforcing all state laws pertaining to the theft of cattle, horses, swine, poultry, fish, farm equipment, chemicals, timber, and all other farm or agriculture-related crimes. The Bureau is also responsible for the investigation and prosecution of all persons who violate any of the laws administered by the Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce.

In addition to its law enforcement function, the Agriculture and Livestock Theft Bureau maintains registration of all livestock brands. Livestock in Mississippi do not have to be branded; however, if they are branded, the brand must be registered. The brands are recorded for a five-year period at a cost of \$5 dollars. Registered brands are published in book form and distributed to law enforcement throughout the state. The most current book was printed in December 2012 and has over a 1,100 brands registered.

 Barry Coward, Director

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Percentage distribution of dollar value of reported crimes.

Total dollar value of \$1,694,972 for FY 2015.

